

Senate Resolution 88

By: Senators Fort of the 39th, Stephens of the 27th, Seay of the 34th, Tate of the 38th, Miles of the 43rd and others

ADOPTED**A RESOLUTION**

Creating the Henry McNeal Turner Tribute Commission and authorizing the placement of a statue on the grounds of the state capitol building; creating the Joint Commission for Recognition of Public Servants; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, Henry McNeal Turner was born near Abbeville, South Carolina, in 1834 and was ordained to preach in 1853; and

WHEREAS, during the Civil War, he became the first African American to hold the position of chaplain in the U.S. Army, and after the war he was active in Georgia state politics and he served in the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, when African Americans were expelled from the General Assembly in 1868, he delivered a rousing oratory in protest of their treatment; and

WHEREAS, he became the 12th A.M.E. Bishop in 1880, and for 12 years he served as chancellor of Morris Brown College, now Morris Brown University, and he donated land in Atlanta for the construction of a school for African American children; and

WHEREAS, it is only right that this great man in Georgia history be recognized.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

(a) There is created the Henry McNeal Turner Tribute Commission to be composed of 11 members selected as follows:

- (1) Two members appointed by the Governor, with a chairperson and vice chairperson to be designated by the Governor from among these members;

- (2) Two members appointed by the President of the Senate;
 - (3) One member appointed by the Georgia Senate Committee on Assignments and one member each to be appointed by the Georgia Senate Majority and Minority Leaders; and
 - (4) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives and one member each to be appointed by the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Georgia House of Representatives.
- (b) Membership on the commission shall not constitute the holding of a public office and the members of the commission shall serve without compensation.
- (c) The commission shall exist for an indefinite term as may be necessary to complete its work and shall be dissolved by resolution of the commission upon completion of its work.

SECTION 2.

The commission is authorized to:

- (1) Provide for the commissioning of a statue of Henry McNeal Turner, the same to be accomplished solely through voluntary contributions to the commission or such fund or funds as it may establish or designate for such purpose;
- (2) Provide for the selection and design of an appropriate placement for such statue on or adjacent to the grounds of the Georgia state capitol building, provided that the site selected and the design of the placement shall be approved by the State Properties Commission;
- (3) Solicit and accept gifts, donations, and grants in furtherance of its purposes; and
- (4) Work cooperatively with any private group, organization, association, or corporation having the same general purpose as the commission.

SECTION 3.

Upon completion of the commission's work, the Governor shall be authorized to accept and provide for the dedication of a statue of Henry McNeal Turner to be placed on or adjacent to the grounds of the state capitol building.

SECTION 4.

The effectiveness of the provisions of Sections 1, 2, and 3 of this resolution shall be contingent upon the positive findings relative thereto of the Joint Commission for the Recognition of Public Servants as created under Section 5 of this resolution.

SECTION 5.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Over the years the General Assembly has recognized distinguished and deserving public servants through various means, including the commissioning and placement of statues and paintings; and

(2) To date there has not been a consensus as to the best way to honor such persons, and the result has been inconsistent and diverse honors and memorials; and

(3) The public would be well served if a commission were established to oversee the process of honoring our state's leaders and heroes in a predictable and dignified way so the public, and in particular our youth, can both remember those so honored and learn and take inspiration from their achievements, contributions, and sacrifices; and

(b) There is created the Joint Commission for the Recognition of Public Servants to be composed of eight members as follows: one member appointed by the Governor, whose appointee shall be the chairperson; the director of the Georgia Capitol Museum; the director of the Georgia Building Authority; and the director of the Georgia Council for the Arts; additionally, two members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and two members shall be appointed by the Senate Committee on Assignments, with one member from each designated as co-vice chairperson. The commission shall undertake a study of the need for a permanent commission to establish methods for honoring distinguished and deserving public servants and shall make recommendations to that end. The commission may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The legislative members of the commission shall receive the allowances authorized for legislative members of interim legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more than six days unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the House of Representatives and Senate. The commission shall make a report of its findings and recommendations, with suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senate Committee on Assignments on or before December 1, 2005. The commission shall stand abolished on December 1, 2005.